

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 30, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, District of Columbia 20500

Dear President Biden:

Jobs and economic development are pivotal to maintaining America's position as a global economic leader. Unfortunately, throughout the Southeast United States, persistent poverty and declining business opportunities have left many communities economically stagnant. As your Administration and Congress work together to strengthen and support states and localities, more federal support is necessary to ensure that all communities, particularly underserved communities, are not left behind. The Southeast Crescent Regional Commission ("Commission") seeks to serve this purpose by engaging and reinforcing economic opportunities within our most vulnerable communities. Although established over a decade ago, the Commission has not yet become operational due to the lack of a presidentially appointed, Senate-confirmed federal co-chair. We respectfully ask for your nomination of a federal co-chair.

The Commission was created through the 2008 Farm Bill alongside the Northern Border Regional Commission and the Southwest Border Regional Commission to advance economic conditions in communities that lacked access to capital and adequate public infrastructure. As the currently active federal regional commissions demonstrate, these federal-state partnerships can play a major role in developing basic public infrastructure, shaping workforce innovations, and deploying telecommunications systems, among other key assets.<sup>1</sup> Upon formation, the Commission would be led by governors of the region's seven states – Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia – and a presidentially appointed, Senate-confirmed federal co-chair.

Regional commissions have a demonstrated history of delivering results. For example, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) invested \$162 million in 474 projects supporting 26,300 jobs and leveraging \$858 million in private funding.<sup>2</sup> ARC also supported training for 20,800 students and workers during the year. Likewise, in FY2020, the Northern Border Regional Commission dedicated \$18 million towards 38 projects with \$110 million matched from other public and private investments;<sup>3</sup> an additional five million dollars was awarded to five projects to support development in areas traditionally dependent on forest-based industries. We believe the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission could have a similar economic impact in our communities.

For more than a decade, the Commission has enjoyed congressional support. From FY2010 to FY2020, the Commission received \$250,000 annually, and \$1 million in FY2021. Despite this support, due to the lack of a federal co-chair, funding has been far short of its authorization and reauthorization levels of \$30

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.crs.gov/Reports/R45997>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.arc.gov/report/appalachian-region-fy-2020-investments/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.nbrc.gov/uploads/NBRC-2020-Annual-Report-Final\\_12-28-web.pdf](https://www.nbrc.gov/uploads/NBRC-2020-Annual-Report-Final_12-28-web.pdf)

million and \$33 million annually in the 2008 and 2018 Farm Bills, respectively. Federal leadership is desperately needed to fill this critical position.<sup>4</sup>

The appointment of a federal co-chair is essential to the formation and functioning of the Commission, and to deliver on its mission to promote sustainable economies, job and business development, and improved quality of life throughout the Southeast United States. Again, we respectfully ask for your nomination of a federal co-chair for the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission to bring economic development to disadvantaged communities throughout the Southeast United States.

Sincerely,



A. Donald McEachin  
Member of Congress



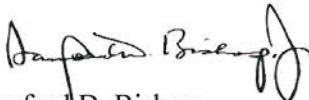
Raphael Warnock  
United States Senator



Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator



Elaine G. Luria  
Member of Congress



Sanford D. Bishop  
Member of Congress



Al Lawson  
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson Jr.  
Member of Congress



Tim Kaine  
United States Senator



Lindsey O. Graham  
United States Senator



Roger F. Wicker  
United States Senator



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
Member of Congress



Deborah K. Ross  
Member of Congress



Stephanie Murphy  
Member of Congress



David Price  
Member of Congress

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.crs.gov/Reports/IF11744>



Bennie Thompson  
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams  
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
Member of Congress



Terri A. Sewell  
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Darren Soto  
Member of Congress



G. K. Butterfield  
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